

REMARKS

The office action of July 25, 2003 has been reviewed and its contents carefully noted. Reconsideration of this case, as amended, is requested. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 remain in this case and have been amended. Claim 3 has been cancelled without prejudice. No claims and no new matter are added by this response. The grounds for rejection posited by the examiner, and applicant's amendments/arguments overcoming these grounds, are discussed below.

Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1 through 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by *Katoh* (U.S. Patent No. 6,038,739). Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejection, but has amended the application as set forth above.

1. The examiner, in pertinent part, states:

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by USPN 6,038,739 to Katoh. Katoh discloses a hinge assembly comprising a first hinge member (13) and a second hinge member (11) relatively turnably connected together about an axis of rotation and a friction member (22) composed of an elastic material and disposed between the first and second hinge member, relative turning motion between the first and second hinge members being restricted by friction resistance generated between contact surfaces of the friction member and the first and second hinge members (col. 4, lines 59-64), the hinge assembly further comprising interval restricting means (19) disposed between the first and second hinge members and adapted to restrict intervals of the contact surfaces of the first and second hinge members with respect to the friction member.

2. The amendments made by the applicant, as set forth above, overcome the grounds for rejection set forth by the examiner. As to claim 1, the first hinge member includes the main body and the movable portion disposed on the main body such that the movable portion is non-turnable but movable in the direction of the axis of rotation. Moreover, the invention includes the interval restricting means disposed between the movable portion and the second hinge member. The interval restricting means has a moving mechanism. The moving mechanism moves the movable portion in the direction of the axis of rotation in response to the turning motion of the second hinge member. Katoh (US Patent No. 6,038,739) does not include a

When the rotation shaft 13 rotates, the ball 25 moves against the elastic means 26, or is moved by the elastic means. However, the ball 25 never moves the rotation shaft 13. Katoh can not, therefore, be said to disclose the movable portion and moving mechanism of the instant invention. Kim, Cho and Wu also do not disclose the moving mechanism of the instant invention.

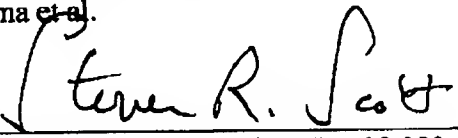
It is, therefore, respectfully suggested that the rejection of independent claim 1 as being anticipated by USPN 6,038,739 to Katoh has been overcome. Dependent claims 2, 4, 5, and 6, being dependent upon and further limiting independent claim 1, should also be allowable for that reason, as well as for the additional recitations they contain. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicant believes the claims, as amended, are patentable over the prior art, and that this case is now in condition for allowance of all claims therein. Such action is thus respectfully requested. If the Examiner disagrees, or believes for any other reason that direct contact with Applicants' attorney would advance the prosecution of the case to finality, he is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

"Recognizing that Internet communications are not secured, I hereby authorize the PTO to communicate with me concerning any subject matter of this application by electronic mail. I understand that a copy of these communications will be made of record in the application file."

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